

GASOLENE GOSSIP

By HANK CALDWELL.

Plummer Leaves Locomobile.

It is not a pleasant thing to see such aristocratic old timers as John F. Plummer getting out of the automobile business. It may be possible he has not left us entirely, but he has resigned from the Locomobile company, and when I called him yesterday morning at his country seat on the Hudson he said he could not make any positive announcement for the future.

He was just going to shoot a few moths balls on the Sleepy Hollow links and did not appear to be deeply interested in the Bread Line. From this I infer somebody has reserved a drawing room for him somewhere on Automobile Row.

All he would say about the Locomobile was that "it is still the best car in the world." This much we had already gathered from its advertising.

Nevertheless, it is but fair to assume certain changes have taken place in the organization since the death of S. T. Davis, jr., the founder. Mr. Plummer has been with the company for sixteen years, and the association could hardly have been broken off so suddenly without cause.

In 1902, when the Locomobile was a high wheel, spider-like steam carriage, Mr. Plummer went around the world, preaching the gospel of Loco in China, Japan, Australia, India, Egypt and South America. In 1903 he was placed in charge of the New York branch, and as the Locomobile grew to be a vehicle for the exclusive Mr. Plummer boasted to a social level from which it could easily look down on anything which prowled up and down Fifth Avenue. He made it a topic for men in the ultra clubs and a sweet morsel for the women of fashion to discuss at their afternoon time killers.

When it became necessary for the Locomobile to have a home in New York which was in keeping with its social position Mr. Plummer selected the site and planned the building. It will stand for many years as a testimonial to his excellent taste.

Although Mr. Plummer surrounded himself and the Locomobile with this dignified atmosphere he was never undemocratic, and his exquisite cars were never too good for the humblest shopper to see. Every visitor was treated with extreme politeness from the moment he entered the door until he left, and was asked to call again.

Mr. Plummer was always ready to cooperate with his fellow dealers in any movement which was for the good of the trade. He was for a long time president of the New York Dealers' Association, and did much to make it an influential organization.

When I say that Automobile Row has lost, only temporarily, I hope, a mighty high type of business man, I think I express the feeling of every man who has come in contact with Mr. Plummer during his sixteen years of active service with the Locomobile Company of America.

Gasolene Extremely Scarce.

The gasolene situation is quite desperate. The Faithful Old Standard Oil Company, which seldom kicks when business is bad, has not complained, but it is a fact that never before in the history of the oil business in America has the Standard been compelled to turn down orders because of a shortage in crude oil.

This is the time of year when the gasolene manufacturer should store for the spring business, but I understand that none of the Standard Oil companies can get enough crude oil to produce the volume of gasolene which is demanded for current consumption.

The telegraph and telephone wires have been kept warm by Standard officials for a number of weeks past in quest of crude oil. In the meantime the company is said to have turned down numerous large orders for gasolene "from the out-

side," meaning outside of the company's regular customers.

There is every evidence that the Standard intends to adhere to its policy of taking care of its old customers first. The latest consular reports show that the United States is exporting only about two-thirds of its usual volume of gasolene. The value of the gas exported during the nine months ending last September was only \$10,456,000, against \$18,514,000 for the corresponding months of 1914. Since September the exportation of gas has been far below the minimum record.

The plain fact is we are consuming more gas than the supply of crude oil will yield at a figure which the automobilist considers reasonable.

I have heard, it said by men in the automobile trade that they feared we would face 80 cent gasolene next spring. But I have been unable to find an official of the Standard Oil Company who would predict such a price.

The oil men hold, on the contrary, that the pressure will likely be relieved before spring. If things should quiet down in Mexico, we might get back to 15 cent gas. At present the East is drawing its supply of gas from what is called the mid-continent fields. The gas we use in New York comes largely from Oklahoma.

A Car to Every 100 People.

In the last decade the automobile industry shows an increase in volume and value of product of 3,278 per cent. Its nearest competitor in point of growth, electrical manufacturing, has gained only 107 per cent. For 1918 alone trade authorities predict a further increase in volume of production of from 20 to 35 per cent, computed on the 1915 volume, and estimate the aggregate output of American factories at 1,000,000 new cars, with a sales value of approximately \$700,000,000.

The totals appear even more impressive when considered in proportion to the population of the country, and mean that in the coming year there will be produced and sold one motor car to every 100 people in the United States. It is estimated that at the present time there are more than 2,000,000 pleasure cars in use in America, or one to every fifty persons, or, to carry it further and considering four persons to a family, approximately one motor car to every twelve families. By the end of the fiscal year of 1919, and assuming the estimated production to have been disposed of, this ratio will have been reduced to one automobile to every eight families.

The distribution of this tremendous manufacturing volume has been general and in no way confined to the more populous sections of the country. New York State, of course, leads the Republic in the number of cars owned in any one state, with something more than 200,000 machines owned within its borders, but in relation to the density of population of the other states New York is far from being unique. Take Kansas, for example. If the corn barons continue to buy automobiles at the present rate, it follows, mathematically, that by July 1, 1919, there will be owned in that state a motor car for every solitary family. To-day even, according to Kansas statistics, there is one automobile to every thirty-four persons in the state, or, to pursue the original ratio, one to every eight families.

Had the old idea in motor car manufacture prevailed and the higher class companies gone on producing a few cars at a high price for a limited market, as before, it is most unlikely car values would have attained their present stable level. It is only because the leaders in the industry set about to serve the broad central market and effected such additions to plants and equipments and facilities as to be able to market the highest class car at a price within general reach that the pres-

ent standards of value were made possible. And, in turn, these standards of value have made possible a distribution so general as to have been inconceivable a few years ago.

The whole effect for both producer and public has been one of mutual advantage; the car buyer to-day may purchase multi-cylinder cars in their various abilities, in six, eight or even twelve cylinder styles, embodying the highest principles of motor car practice, at prices even less than cars of four cylinder capacity built by the same companies a few years ago, and the producers in a responsive market find a dependable outlet through which, perhaps even sooner than we think, the aforementioned millennium may be approached.

Armored Train for Guard.

When the New York National Guard goes into the field next summer for its annual manoeuvres it will be augmented by a thoroughly up-to-date armored motor train. Governor Whitman last week approved an appropriation of \$10,000 for supplies and maintenance for this new unit of the militia.

The appropriation will not be used in any part for the purchase of the armored cars composing

it will carry two three pounders and several machine guns. Ten men will compose the crew.

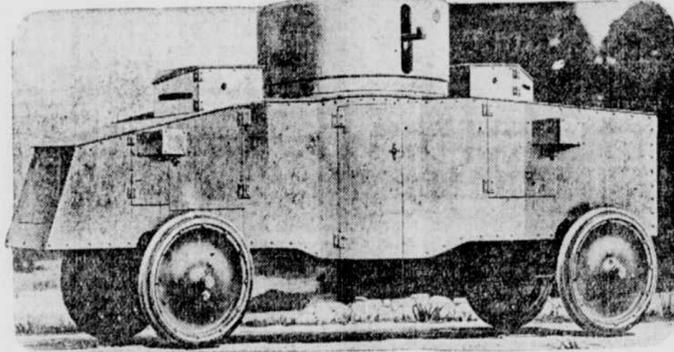
It is what military men call a double drive, having a steering gear at each end. There is only one motor, but the driving gears permit of a reverse speed of more than fifteen miles an hour. The car may be driven into an attack head on, and if things get too warm it may be backed out at a good rate of speed, the rear driver taking up the steering.

Just how many battle cars the first train will contain has not been decided. The majority of the cars will be smaller than this one and designed to make more speed.

Elbert H. Gary, chairman of the United States Steel Corporation, and Charles M. Schwab, of the Bethlehem Steel Company, have interested themselves in the train and are going to manufacture the armor plate.

Packard for Preparedness.

Ernest L. Jones, editor of "Aeronautics," a magazine intended only for the high flyers, has received an interesting letter from Henry B. Joy, president of the Packard Motor Company, in which he out-



Battle Car for New York National Guard.

lines the reason the Packard directors decided to go in for the development of the aero motor, and, in fact, the whole airship.

Mr. Joy says that three out of the seven directors of the Packard company have served in either the army or navy in time of war, and that two other directors have served in the Michigan State troops. They consider it the duty of the company to carry on this aeronautical work as an example to all classes of manufacturers. Mr. Joy thinks it is the duty of all business houses to cooperate with the government in its scheme of preparedness. He says he thinks every manufacturer in the land should mobilize his facilities and stand prepared to serve the government in a practical way at a moment's notice.

The Sixteenth Show.

The National Automobile Show will be sixteen years old on December 31, the opening date of the annual exhibition in Grand Central Palace. Ten years ago a great many manufacturers said they thought the days of the annual automobile show were numbered, and time has proved they were right—except that they did not guess the right number.

When the Grand Central Palace was completed and the show committee decided to abandon Madison Square Garden, more wise men predicted

that the public would never take to the Grand Central Palace.

But as the years roll round the automobile show appears to get larger and larger, and the only trouble Manager S. A. Miles anticipates this year is in handling the crowd. He has placed all of the exhibitors without much difficulty. The White company is the only large exhibitor of former years which will not exhibit in the Palace this season. Despite the general reduction in car prices the aggregate value of the exhibits this year will be more than a million dollars in excess of the value for any preceding year. It is also a fact that the man who buys one of the cars shown this year will get more for his money than ever before.

Who Said Racing Was Dead?

In the daily rush of men and motors we may easily overlook an important development or personage. It was by mere accident that I stumbled upon a copy of the address of G. W. Dickinson, secretary of the Michigan State Fair, before the American Association of Fairs and Expositions, just held in Chicago.

His subject was "Automobile Racing," and after reading the rather lengthy document I am convinced that we have never yet seen the ideal automobile race.

Mr. Dickinson has lifted the curtain which hid it from our view and put us on the right track. He says the monster cement or board speedway idea is a bug which the public will not fall for, and that it cannot be made to pay because the big speedway offers no opportunity for spectacular driving—the only thing that will hold the crowd.

Mr. Dickinson says we must go back to the dirt track, with an oval of a mile or a mile and a half. The car must be a negative element. His ideal would be for every driver to use the same make of car, thus eliminating an advertising element, which he considers a great drawback to the genuine sport.

He believes we have three sensational features in automobile dirt track racing which cannot be introduced on the modern speedway, and that upon them the entire future of the sport must depend. They are the spectacular skid, the hair raising slide and the blood boiling leap. Only the great showman, he says, can realize this, and only the showman can put automobile racing on a lasting basis. Mere sustained speed, he holds, is monotonous and tiresome.

Just how seriously the exposition managers took the suggestions made by Mr. Dickinson is not known, but it is interesting to realize that the kings of the old dirt track school of racing still have at least one sturdy champion left. If in the course of time the perfectly safe speedway fails to thrill us with its form of racing, we have one more chance to hold the public with the automobile slide and leap.

The Carelessness of Pedestrians.

Now that the New York Police Department has begun a classification of street accidents, which will assist in placing the blame where it belongs, we may soon see an end of the statistical faker who has for years been trying to hang all the fault on the motorist. There are careless drivers of both passenger and commercial cars, particularly of heavy trucks, and the police cannot be too severe on them.

Right thinking motorists will back up a crusade against reckless passenger or commercial vehicle driving, because it is for the good of everybody concerned to check all forms of lawlessness in the city streets, but there is no common sense or justice in making ordinances which apply only to motor vehicles, when the most recent and accurate

police reports show that 90 per cent of the accidents are caused by the carelessness of the injured. Under the new form the police report of a street accident covers the cause, location, nature, seriousness, type of vehicle involved, age of injured and time of day.

Of 1,033 accidents in August in which vehicles were involved, and the causes of which were reported, 903 (or 90 per cent) were due to the fault of the injured, 51 to the fault of the drivers, 45 to defects in the vehicles, 34 to skidding and 42 to various other causes.

Of 743 persons struck by vehicles of all kinds, including bicycles, during the month, 679 were killed or injured as a result of their own fault and only 31 due to the fault of the drivers, while 294 persons were struck by vehicles when crossing streets at other than street intersections. Falls from vehicles accounted for 224 accidents; 171 persons were hurt when getting on or off street cars in an improper way; 137 were killed or injured while playing in the street through no fault of drivers; 90 ran into or in front of vehicles; 26 were intoxicated, and 58 were stealing rides.

Among other interesting facts shown by the report are that street accidents increase steadily from January to July and then gradually decrease until the end of the year; that most accidents occur from 11 a. m. to 12 noon and from 5 to 7 p. m.; that about 45 per cent of the persons fatally hurt are children, and that the largest number of children killed and injured are aged from two to eight years.

Accidents Outside of New York.

The last report of the Massachusetts Highway Commissioner shows the real danger to the pedestrian in that busy and thickly populated state does not lie with the automobile, but rather with the streetcar.

Nearly twice as many persons were killed or injured in street railway accidents in Massachusetts during the year 1914 as in automobile accidents, observes the Highway Commissioner. "Any computation made," he states, "on assuming an ordinary mileage for automobiles and taking the actual mileage of the street railways, will show that the motor vehicle runs several times as many miles as the streetcar does before it either kills or injures any one."

Considering only accidents to persons who were not passengers, 10,000 streetcars killed or injured 1,491 persons, and about 100,000 automobiles and trucks killed or injured 3,304. Some person was either killed or injured for every 18,000 miles that a streetcar was operated, and one person for every 110,000 miles a motor vehicle was operated, assuming that the automobile travelled an average of 6,000 miles in the year.

"In accident cases it often happens," the Commissioner observes, "that the pedestrian, the bicycle rider or the driver of a carriage is careless or reckless and to blame, rather than the operator of the motor car. It is certainly deplorable that so many accidents occur, but it must be borne in mind that some accidents are unavoidable, no matter how careful the operators of motor cars may be."

The figures given, and observations made on the part of the coroner of Cook County for street accidents in Chicago, those of the New York Police Department and the accident reports of the Boston Police Department, which show that only a small minority of accidents are due to the fault of motor vehicle operators and that the rate of accidents per mile travelled is much smaller for automobiles than for streetcars and horse drawn vehicles.

MOTOR MEN AND MOVIES

Springfield Body Co. Quadruples Facilities

New Million Dollar Corporation Takes Over Business and Plant of Old Company.

The Springfield Body Company has been incorporated with a capitalization of \$1,000,000 to take over the business of the Springfield Metal Body Company, of Springfield, Mass.

The new corporation will be headed by W. L. Fry, New York City, as president; vice-president and director of sales, E. W. McGookin, Detroit, Mich.; vice-president and chief engineer, Hindsale Smith, Springfield, Mass.; treasurer, A. P. Smith, Springfield, Mass.

The board of directors includes as members Walter L. Fry, E. W. McGookin, Hindsale Smith, A. P. Smith and Frederick Fuller.

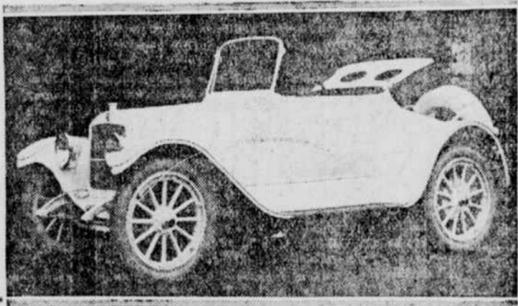
About a year ago W. L. Fry, president of the new corporation, became interested in the old company.

The demand for the convertible body convinced Mr. Fry of the business possibilities in that field.

He realized, however, that the trend of the automobile business was toward medium priced cars, and that in order to reach this market, which was growing by leaps and bounds, he must lower the price of convertible bodies. His problem was, therefore, one of organization—of securing men of proven ability to handle quantity production and a large volume of sales.

Just how well Mr. Fry analyzed the possibilities of the market for convertible bodies and solved his problem of

LATEST MODEL STANDARD ROADSTER.



This attractive roadster, done in white enamel, is offered by the Duffy Motors Corp., New York distributors for the New Standard, manufactured by the Standard Steel Car Co.

organization is best shown by the tremendous increase in business secured by the Springfield Body Company, amounting to 3,000 per cent, in about 120 days, which in turn necessitated incorporation with an increased capitalization.

The convertible body made by this company is one of the most popular on the market and is being used by several large automobile concerns. The Studebaker, Maxwell, Chandler, Mitchell

and Paige-Detroit companies all furnish Springfield convertible bodies as regular equipment on their cars.

G.-E. in Owen Magnetic.

The General Electric Company has bought into the Owen Magnetic, in connection with the consolidation, which has been pending several months, the Entz Motor Patents Corporation has been formed, with a capital of

\$6,000,000, none of which has yet been offered on the market. Ray M. Owen is to be president and E. S. Partridge sales manager of the Patent Corporation, which has a right to use all the General Electric patents which would improve the Owen Magnetic car.

The electric parts of the Owen Magnetic car will be built at the General Electric plant at Fort Wayne, Ind. It is the purpose of the new company to license other automobile makers to use the Owen Magnetic system, which is a gas motor employed to produce electricity for running and controlling the car. In this system both mechanical clutch and gears are done away with and the car operates on an indefinite number of speeds.

King Co. Has Sensation.

In addition to manufacturing a five-passenger popular priced eight cylinder motor car, it is commonly reported that the King Motor Car Company has before the New York automobile show, which is being held at the King plant are reticent, but everything indicates that the King has something sensational that they will announce before the New York automobile show.

The fact that Assistant General Manager J. R. Siegfried of the King factory is now directing the operating of five experimental engineering cars is common knowledge among the automobile engineers here in Detroit. Phenomenal reports of the performance of the King engineering experimental cars come from the hilly cities of Pittsburgh and Cincinnati and the Rocky Mountains of Colorado.

Another indication that the King Motor Car Company has something sensational is taken from the fact that a large number of King dealers from all over the country have lately been at the King plant.

F. A. Volbrecht, vice-president and general manager of the King Motor Car Company, when asked the plans of his company for the forthcoming year said that statement might be forthcoming shortly.

Hurlburt Opens New Plant.

The Hurlburt Motor Truck Company has just opened its new plant on the Harlem River, near Third Avenue. Motor truck users in New York are familiar with the product of this company, which has been growing rapidly during the past four years. It was founded in 1912 by William B. Hurlburt, who had already established himself here as a sales manager. He was for a number of years the Packard representative in the metropolitan district, and he has built his own organization along the most substantial and scientific lines.

Associated with him are a number of prominent business men, who take an active interest in the affairs of the company. On his board of directors are: Robert B. Roosevelt, capitalist, New York and Washington; A. A. Anderson, capitalist, New York City; Dickson J. Brown, vice-president Tidewater Oil Company, New York City; Dudley O. Coit, vice-president Central Trust Com-

pany, New York City; Duncan G. Harris, director Ritz-Carlton Hotel, New York City; Donald Mackay, capitalist, New York City; Howard Stout Nielson, banker, Darien, Conn.; William E. Aceton, president Norwalk Securities Company, Norwalk, Conn.; Walter S. Willson, banker, Bankers Trust Company, 16 Wall Street, New York City; George A. McLaughlin, lawyer, New York City; Judge Henry W. Gregory, Norwalk, Conn.; Kunal R. Babbitt, secretary Alaska Castineau Mining Company, 25 Broad Street, New York City; Reed G. His hand, real estate, Fifth Avenue and Forty-first Street, New York City; William B. Hurlburt, president Hurlburt Motor Truck Company, 669 Fifth Avenue, New York City; John P. Grier, member Christie, D. Barney & Co., 25 Broad Street, New York City; Merle Middleton, Lime Locomotive Corporation, New York City; Archibald M. McCrea, chairman of board of directors Union Spring and Manufacturing Company, New York City.

A. C. Harrington Promoted. A. C. Harrington has been appointed sales manager of the New York Packard Company. He has been in the Packard organization for thirteen years, nine of which were spent in the New York selling field.

While Mr. Harrington is but thirty-one years of age, he has had wide experience in all departments of the Packard, and is credited with having a larger acquaintance among buyers than any of the younger automobile salesmen on Broadway.

Mr. Harrington's allotment for the coming season is 1,375 cars, representing a value of nearly \$5,000,000.

Premier Plant Sold.

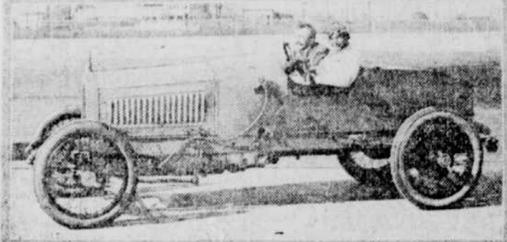
Frank E. Smith, trustee of the Premier Motor Manufacturing Company, announces the sale of the assets of the company to a syndicate, but fails to disclose the names of the purchasers. Mr. Smith says the syndicate has ample means for reviving and carrying on the Premier business, and will immediately start to put this once famous car back on the market. The purchasers hope to exhibit their 1916 models at the New York and Chicago national automobile shows.

Series of Lectures at A. C. A.

A series of illustrated lectures on "Highway Construction and Maintenance, with the problems incident thereto, will be given under the auspices of the Department of Highway Engineering of Columbia University and the Automobile Club of America. The lectures are to be held in the assembly room of the Automobile Club, 247 West Fifty-fourth Street, and all interested persons may obtain, without charge, tickets of admission by applying to the secretary of the club.

The first of these lectures will be given by Arthur H. Blanchard, professor in charge of the graduate course in highway engineering at Columbia University, and consulting highway engineer, New York City, to-morrow evening at 8:30. Professor Blanchard's sub-

THE PACKARD TWIN SIX SPECIAL.



Jesse G. Vincent, Vice-President of Engineering, and Henry B. Joy, President of the Packard Company, in the Packard Special which recently attained a speed of 102 1/4 miles per hour on the Sheepshead Bay Speedway.

ject will be "State and Municipal Highway Problems." The second lecture will be delivered on Monday, December 20, at 8:30 p. m., Morris L. Cooke, director of the Department of Public Works of the City of Philadelphia, speaking on "Contract Procedure for Public Works."

Though the exact dates have not yet been fixed, other lectures will be given by John A. Bense, consulting engineer and former State Engineer of New York; Dr. Frederick A. Cleveland, director, Bureau of Municipal Research of New York City; William H. Connell, chief, Bureau of Highways and Street Cleaning of Philadelphia; Edwin Duffy, Commissioner of Highways of the State of New York; E. P. Goodrich, consulting engineer to the president of the Borough of Manhattan; Nelson P. Lewis, chief engineer to the Board of Estimate and Apportionment of New York City; George W. Tillson, consulting engineer to the President of the Borough of Brooklyn; George C. Warren, president, Warren Brothers, Company, of Boston.

Winter Models Popular.

If the response in the way of orders, new connections and retail business is a criterion, then the policy of the King Motor Car Company to make their announcement of models in the fall or winter months has proven a success. Since announcing the improved five-passenger eight-cylinder King this company has had an extra avalanche of orders added to their requests from dealers inquiring about the line, and have even been congratulated by automobile owners for making their announcements at this time.

Automobile Salon at Hotel Astor

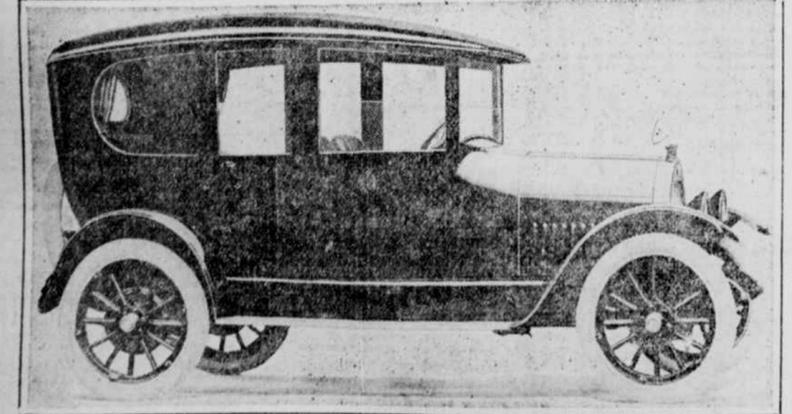
Exhibition Which Opens on January 3 Contains Several Domestic Cars.

January 3 to 8, inclusive, is the date selected for the Automobile Salon, held at the Hotel Astor, New York. The forthcoming salon will have more exhibitors than any of its predecessors, and the participation of a number of American makes will emphasize the changing of this long established show from one of foreign cars exclusively to an exhibition of representative high grade cars of both Europe and America.

Foremost among the American makers who will exhibit their new models at the Automobile Salon the first week in January is the White Company, of Cleveland. In arranging to show its product in New York only at the salon a desire to be represented at an exhibition limited to high grade cars of international reputation, where ample space could be had to properly display its new models, and where conditions were most congenial for those interested in automobiles of this class.

Stefan J. Kjeldsen, who will again manage the Automobile Salon, names the different makes of cars for which space has already been secured in the following statement: "The exhibit of three makes of prominent American cars at last year's salon, alongside of those of foreign manufacture, marked a change in the character of these annual exhibitions."

JEFFERY ADDS DEMOUNTABLE SEDAN.



Shown in New York by the Poertner Motor Car Company.

AUTOMOBILE AND STEAMER RUGS

Also also Carriage, Porch, Lounger, Hammock, Tent, Camp, Yacht and Power Boat Rugs—of Extra Bed Comforts.

A Big and Attractive Line

FINE ALL-WOOL SHAWLS **MACKINAW ROBES**

Beautiful Weave Designs and Colorings All Wool—Self-bound (best bound) Fine Style—Soft, Warm Fabric—3 1/2 to 7 1/2 Measurements do not include fringe) lbs. 54-66-54-74-84-84.

COLD WEATHER STUFF OUR SPECIALTY—Extra Large and Heavy, Thick, Warm Fabric.

THE BECKMAN COMPANY

NORTHERN OHIO BLANKET MILLS. 3157 FULTON ROAD, CLEVELAND, OHIO

If Your Dealer Does Not Handle Our Line Apply Directly To Us for Color Plate Catalog and Price List.

PATFINDER TALKS—No 12

An Invitation—Our Twin "Six" DOES good by its running, instead of merely having its agents TALK. We invite you in here, Mr. Ingold, Mr. Orvelvet, Mr. B. Wise, Mr. J. P. Intelligence, Mr. Shrewd, Mr. Oso Curious, Mr. Q. T. Rich, Mr. Swift, Mr. Trade, Mr. Eurygator, Mrs. Murray Hill, Mrs. Young, Mrs. Willyon Trim, all of you. Drop in and we'll show you something. It's more than a car. It's twin.

"TWIN SIX," \$2475. Have a Trial Run!

Senior Bros

EA/TERN DISTRIBUTOR 1875 BROADWAY NEW YORK Phone Columbus 9882